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BELLE AND SEBASTIAN

Stuart Murdoch talks about the band's upcoming concert. 10-11

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MASSAGE HORROR

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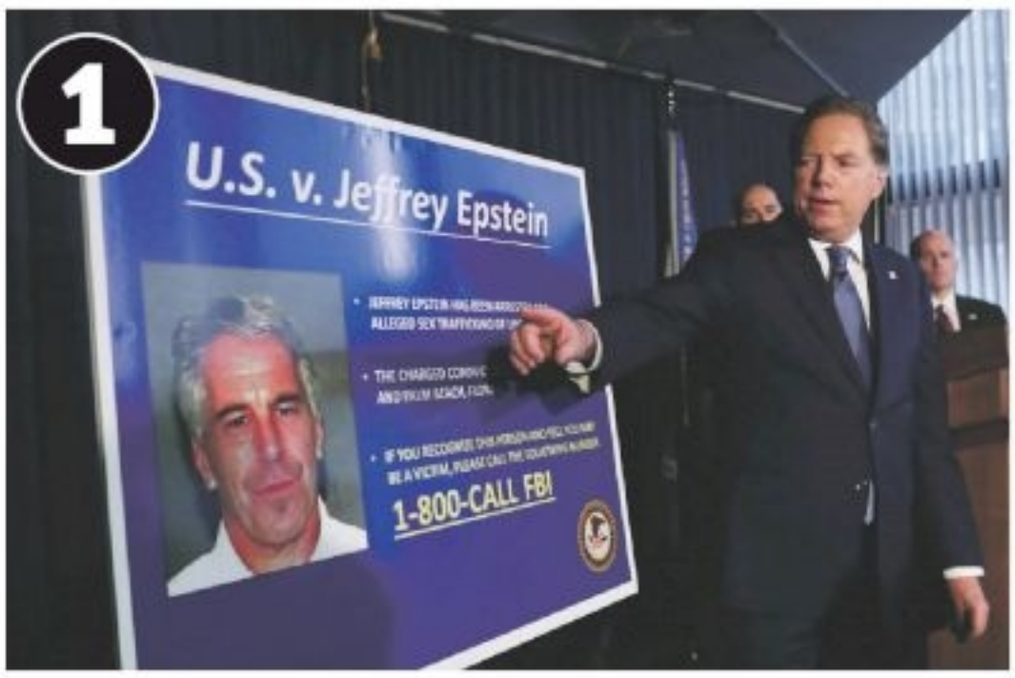
8 THINGS TO KNOW

Financier Epstein pleads not guilty to charges of sex trafficking

The billionaire faces up to 45 years in prison if convicted.



REUTERS

American financier Jeffrey Epstein pleaded not guilty on Monday to charges of sex trafficking as prosecutors accused him of luring dozens of girls as young as 14 to his luxury homes in New York and Florida and paying them for sex acts.

An indictment unsealed in federal court in Manhattan accused Epstein, 66, of arranging for girls to perform nude "massages" and other sex acts, and paying some girls to recruit others, from at least 2002 to 2005.

"The alleged behavior shocks the conscience, and while the charged conduct is from a number of years ago, it is still profoundly important to the many alleged victims, now young women," U.S. Attorney Geoffrey Berman said at a press conference. "They deserve their day in court."

Epstein was known for socializing with politicians and royalty, with friends who have included President Donald Trump, former President Bill Clinton and, according to court papers, Britain's Prince Andrew. None of those people were mentioned in the indictment.

Wearing dark blue jail scrubs, Epstein entered his plea before U.S. Magistrate Judge Henry Pitman to one count of sex trafficking and one count of sex trafficking conspiracy. Epstein faces up to 45 years in prison if convicted.

According to the indictment, the former hedge fund manager "intentionally sought out minors and knew that many of his victims were in fact under the age of 18, including because, in some instances, minor victims expressly told him their age."

Epstein, who registered as a sex offender under a 2008 plea deal in Florida, has said in earlier court filings that his encounters with alleged victims were consensual and that he believed they were 18 when they occurred.

Epstein will remain in jail until at least July 15, when a judge has scheduled a bail hearing.

Prosecutors have said Epstein should be denied bail, arguing he poses an "extraordinary risk of flight" because of his wealth, private planes and significant international ties.

MANHATTAN MANSION SEARCH

Epstein was arrested Saturday night at New Jersey's Teterboro Airport after returning from Paris on his private plane.

Prosecutors said a search of Epstein's mansion in Manhattan uncovered evidence of hundreds, and perhaps thousands, of nude photographs of "what appeared to be underage girls."

Berman encouraged other victims to come forward and contact prosecutors.

The case is being handled by the public corruption unit of Berman's office.

> **"He's a lot of fun to be with. It is even said that he likes beautiful women as much as I do, and many of them are on the younger side. No doubt about it — Jeffrey enjoys his social life."** Donald Trump

Berman declined to discuss media speculation about people affiliated or associated with Epstein, telling reporters: "I urge you not to read into that one way or the other."

In 2002, then-businessman Trump praised Epstein in a New York magazine interview.

"I've known Jeff for 15 years. Terrific guy," Trump said. "He's a lot of fun to be with. It is even said that he likes beautiful women as much as I do, and many of them are on the younger side. No doubt about it — Jeffrey enjoys his social life."

"MASSAGES"

According to the indictment, Epstein would initially recruit victims to provide "massages," which they would perform nude or partially nude.

Prosecutors said the encounters would become increasingly sexual, sometimes including groping and indirect contact with victims' genitals, where Epstein would typically masturbate and ask victims to touch him while he did.

Epstein paid girls to recruit new girls, to ensure a "steady supply of new victims to exploit," prosecutors said.

Three unnamed employees, one in Manhattan and two in Florida, aided Epstein by arranging some of his sexual encounters, the indictment said.

At a second court hearing on Monday, U.S. District Judge Richard Berman asked Assistant U.S. Attorney Alex Rossmiller whether other people might be charged. Rossmiller said no additional indictment was imminent but it was possible "down the road." REUTERS

Warren raises $19.1M for prez bid in second quarter

2 Democratic presidential hopeful Elizabeth Warren raised $19.1 million in the second quarter of the year, placing her in the top three for the period among top-tier rivals, her campaign announced in an email to supporters on Monday. Earlier this year, Warren went further than her rivals, who have mostly refused to take money from corporate lobbyists, and swore off conducting high-dollar fundraisers. She has raised nearly all of her money through online donations. The Massachusetts senator has seen her campaign on the rise in recent weeks, climbing in the opinion polls to secure a position in the top five. The top second-quarter fundraising hauls among Democratic candidates reported so far have been by South Bend, Indiana, Mayor Pete Buttigieg, who raised $24.8 million, and former Vice President Joe Biden, who raised $21.5 million. REUTERS

3 Gored on first day of Spanish bull-running fest

3 Three people were gored and a further two people suffered head trauma during the first day of Spain's best-known bull-running festival in the northern town of Pamplona on Sunday, the Red Cross said. One man was loaded into an ambulance on a stretcher shortly after the dash through the medieval town center's narrow streets to the bullring, which lasted two minutes and 41 seconds. Thousands of runners, dressed head to toe in white, with bright-red neckerchiefs, gather every year for the traditional morning run, after which the animals are kept in the bullring until the afternoon's fights. A total 53 people were treated by the Red Cross. Runners often get injured at traditional bull-runs in Spain, but no one has died at Pamplona's San Fermin festival since Spaniard Daniel Jimeno was gored in the neck by a Jandilla bull in 2009. REUTERS

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NEWS

US Customs seizes ship used in May's massive cocaine bust

The MSC Gayane is officially in the hands of government officials.

BECCA GLASSER-BAKER
Rebecca.Glasser@metro.us

MSC Gayane. GETTY IMAGES

U.S. Customs seized the cargo ship involved in last month's bust in which a massive amount of cocaine was discovered.

As Metro previously reported, more than 40,000 pounds of cocaine were found on the MSC Gayane at Philadelphia's Packer Marine Terminal, the largest dock along the Delaware River.

U.S. Attorney William McSwain said that U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) officials obtained a warrant to seize the vessel on July 4, the AP reported.

Swiss firm Mediterranean Shipping Co. owns the cargo ship, which McSwain said is subject to possible forfeiture to the United States.

In a statement, McSwain said, "When a vessel brings such an outrageous amount of deadly drugs into Philadelphia waters, my office and our agency partners will pursue the most severe consequences possible against all involved parties in order to protect our district — and our country."

> **"My office and our agency partners will pursue the most severe consequences possible against all involved parties in order to protect our district — and our country."**
> U.S. Attorney William McSwain

Casey Durst, CBP director of field operations in Baltimore, said in a statement that "the MSC Gayane is the largest vessel seized in U.S. Customs and Border Protection's 230-year history and follows the record seizure of almost 20 tons of cocaine discovered on the vessel." McSwain

New York clears way for release of Trump's state tax returns

President Trump. REUTERS

New York state on Monday cleared the way for Democrats in the U.S. Congress to obtain President Donald Trump's state tax returns, raising the possibility of fresh avenues of inquiry for lawmakers investigating his finances.

Gov. Andrew Cuomo signed an amendment to a tax law that would require the commissioner of the Department of Taxation and Finance to share state income tax returns and reports when certain congressional committees request them.

"This bill gives Congress the ability to fulfill its constitutional responsibilities, strengthen our democratic system and ensure that no one is above the law," said Cuomo, a Democrat.

Trump's attorney Jay Sekulow responded to the law by calling it an example of "more presidential harassment."

"We will respond to this as appropriate," he said in a statement.

The law, effective immediately, opens a new avenue for the Democratic majority in Congress to investigate Trump's business affairs.

New York's state legislature has had a Democratic majority in both the House and the Senate since Democrats won control of the Senate in 2018.

Congressional Democrats have pushed for

In May, over 40,000 pounds of cocaine were seized at Port of Philadelphia.

said on Twitter that the cargo ship is the size of about two city blocks.

As of Monday afternoon, at least six crew members were charged with conspiracy to possess cocaine aboard the ship. A statement issued by the Department of Justice said: "Crew members of the MSC Gayane have been charged with knowingly and intentionally conspiring with each other and others to possess more than five kilograms of cocaine onboard a vessel subject to the jurisdiction of the United States."

Marlon Miller, special agent in charge of Homeland Security Investigations (HSI) Philadelphia, said in a statement: "HSI, in collaboration with CBP, the Coast Guard, and our state and local law enforcement partners continue to aggressively work with the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania to comprehensively investigate this case and bring to justice those who had roles in this drug-smuggling venture."

Gov. Andrew Cuomo. REUTERS

the release of Trump's tax returns since he took office.

In May, Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin denied the House Ways and Means Committee's request that the Internal Revenue Service turn over six years of Trump's federal tax returns, citing his belief that the committee did not have a legitimate legislative reason for the request.

The committee sued Mnuchin and the Treasury Department last week to appeal Mnuchin's decision. REUTERS

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Floodwaters pour through North Arlington, Virginia. REUTERS IMAGES

Life-threatening rains pound capital; White House basement offices leak

More than 3 inches fell within an hour at Reagan Airport.

Driving rains flooded parts of Washington, D.C., on Monday, shattering a daily record in just an hour, forcing 15 swift-water rescues from stranded cars and causing an undeniable leak in the White House.

"This is a life-threatening situation. Seek higher ground now!" the National Weather Service warned amid torrential rains that dropped 3.3 inches at Reagan National Airport from 9 a.m. through 10 a.m. ET, shattering in one hour the previous record of 2.2 inches set in 1958.

It was the seventh-wettest July day since record-keeping began in 1871, said NWS meteorologist Marc Chenard.

"They broke their daily record in an hour," he said.

Even more rainfall was recorded further northwest, in Arlington, Virginia, where about 5 inches fell from 9 to 10 a.m., Chenard said.

The rains eased by late morning and came to an end by around midday, Chenard said.

Torrents of water streamed through the ceiling of Metro stations, and major arteries serving Washington's top museums and memorials shut down due to high water as local emergency personnel reported rescuing several people from cars. By midday, DC Fire and EMS said it had saved 15 drivers.

Firefighters used yellow rubber lifeboats to rescue those trapped by the floodwaters.

Twitter images showed a photograph of a very wet floor beneath office chairs and desks on the basement level of 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue.

"White House is leaking," CNN journalist Betsy Klein tweeted with the picture. REUTERS

Water flood is pictured at the Virginia Square metro station in Arlington.

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President touts environment record, green groups scoff

President Trump. REUTERS

President Donald Trump boasted about his administration's environmental record on Monday, saying America can lead the world in fighting pollution at the same time it is promoting fossil fuels, in a speech green groups derided as "utter fantasy."

Trump, who has dismantled scores of environmental rules and rejected mainstream climate science since taking office, gave the speech at a time of growing national support for strong environmental protections. He is widely seen as vulnerable on that issue ahead of next year's presidential elections.

Trump said America was a leader in providing clean drinking water, had slashed air pollution and was cutting carbon emissions, all while bolstering industry and reducing regulation.

"A strong economy is vital to maintaining a healthy environment," he said. "Punishing Americans is never the right way to produce a better environment or a better economy. We have rejected this failed approach and we are seeing great results."

Trump made the speech at the White House alongside Interior Secretary David Bernhardt, Energy Secretary Rick Perry, Council on Environmental Quality chief Mary Neumayr and Environmental Protection Agency Administrator Andrew Wheeler.

Wheeler told reporters ahead of the event that key air pollutants have fallen around 70 percent since the 1970s, including "under Trump's watch."

EPA data show huge improvements in air quality in recent decades since the imposition of landmark environmental regulations like the Clean Air Act and Clean Water Act. But they also show some increases, since Trump took office, in fine particulate matter emissions like soot and smoke from the combustion of coal and oil.

The United States also slipped in the global environmental rankings to No. 27 in 2018 from 26th during the last year of the Obama administration, according to the Environmental Performance Index, a project by Yale and Columbia universities to measure national performance on air, water, forestry and other metrics.

Ken Cook, a spokesman for the Environmental Working Group, called Trump's speech "utter fantasy."

"There has never been a president who has actively pursued an agenda so hostile to the environment and public health at the behest of polluters than Mr. Trump," he said.

> **"There has never been a president who has actively pursued an agenda so hostile to the environment and public health at the behest of polluters than Mr. Trump."**
>
> Ken Cook, spokesman for the Environmental Working Group

"It's absurd for President Trump to claim any environmental credentials when his administration continues to drive a destructive pro-polluter agenda at the expense of the American people," said Jill Tauber, vice president of litigation, climate and energy at Earthjustice, which has filed 120 lawsuits against the administration.

FOSSIL FUEL SUPERPOWER

The United States has become the world's biggest oil and gas producer over the last couple of years, thanks mainly to a technology-led drilling boom.

REUTERS

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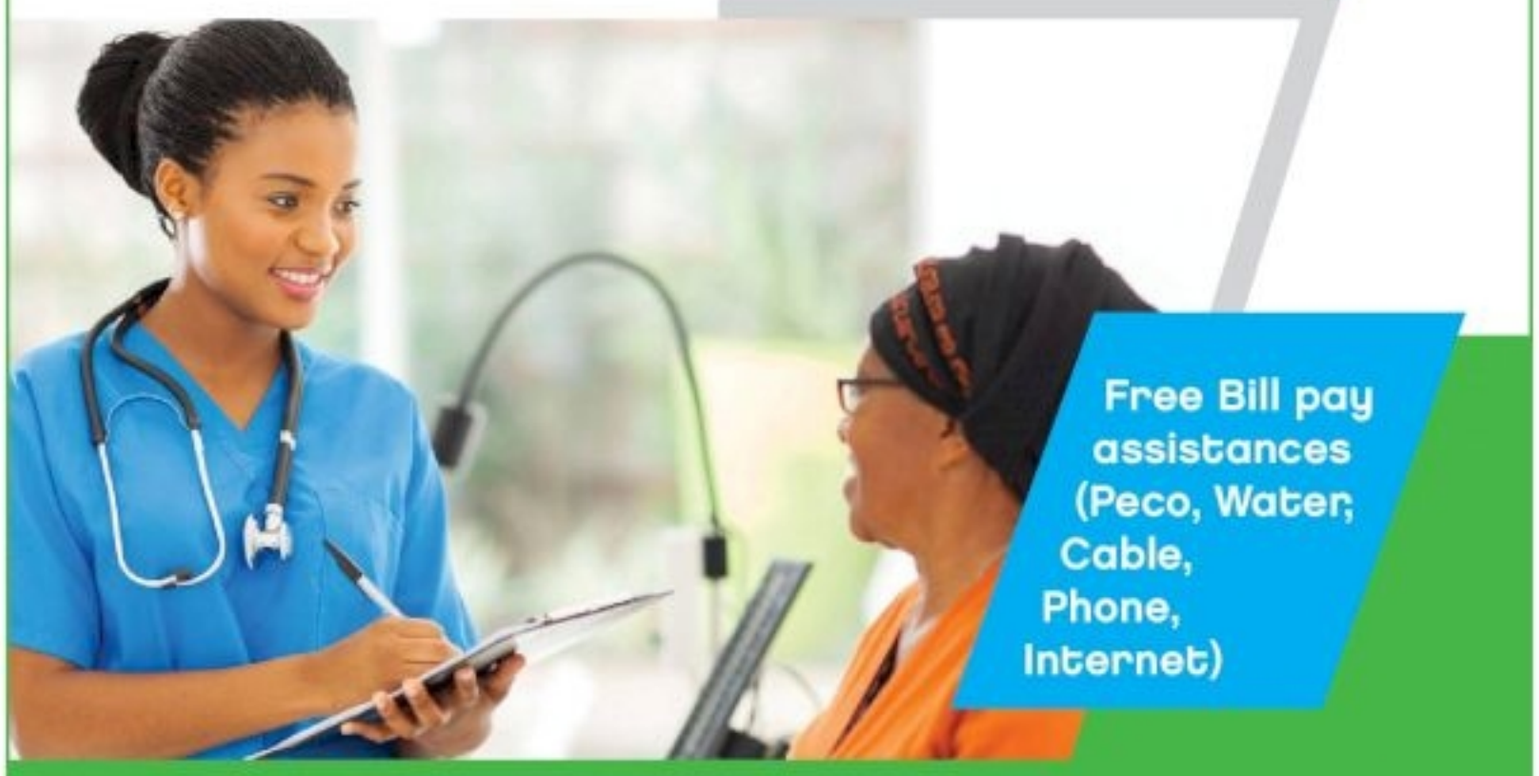

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LIFESTYLE

My job was to defend the legacy of "The Lion King" JON FAVREAU

"The Lion King" is undoubtedly one of the most popular animated classics. Twenty-five years after the release of the original film, Disney has decided to release a live-action version with realistic animation that could be easily confused with a documentary feature. American director Jon Favreau was in charge of relaunching the musical film. He told Metro his main aim was to defend the legacy of the original 1994 movie while modernizing it with cutting-edge technology, including VR.

DANIEL CASILLAS, MWN
letters@metro.us

Is it a great responsibility to direct the new version of "The Lion King"?
It is a great responsibility because people love the old one [movie] so much. So many people have seen the stage show, too, and both do a wonderful job telling that great story. So it was my job to protect the legacy of the original. We added some things to make it feel original and new, so it feels different.

What is your "Lion King" story?
I saw the original. I was an adult already and then I saw it again with my children as they got old enough. You know, I had just finished working on "The Jungle Book" recently and I thought about how wonderful the music and technology was. I learned so much while working on that production, and I thought it could be a real marriage. Because the story holds up incredibly well and the music is fantastic. I was very curious to see how the technology would work with these characters.

Tell us more about the technology you used.
Well, we built essentially a virtual-reality game, a filmmaking multiplayer game, so that the whole crew could wear VR headsets and go in. It was built on a unity game engine system. And so we were programming it, writing code throughout the process because we figured out what tools we needed. We figured out how to use camera equipment to drive virtual cameras within the virtual set. It was like making an animated movie except we could go inside of it. And so we would watch the lions move around and perform together. Then we would set up shots with all of our crew as though we were filming real lions.

How was it to work without actors?
Well, you know, you do, but you do it separately. In a live-action film, you are talking to the actor and you are talking to the cinematographer and the gaffer. Then you are checking how much time you have left with the AD so you have to juggle. But in this one, I would work with just the actors, record their voices and performances, they would go home and then I would work with just the film crew. Then just the musicians. So I separated everything, but I still got to collaborate with all of the same people.

What was the biggest challenge of creating this film?
The original was so popular and holds up so well that we had to make sure that we lived up to people's expectations. We also did something new and fresh enough that justified why we had to make another version.

Are there many differences between this film and the older one?
Well, story-wise we really tried to stick very close to it, because it doesn't need reinventing. The story is still very strong and timeless. We had to find ways to differentiate this from the other while still maintaining the same story. And that came from casting and technology. There are new scenes and dialogues are different, the comedy has changed. But if you've watched it, you should definitely recognize the old film in it.

Some people say it is not really a live-action film. What is your opinion on that?
I think it is both. I think it is definitely an animated film because we used all the steps that you would in an animated movie, but we did use a live-action film crew to create within VR. And I think when you watch it, it will appear to be a live-action film. That was our goal. So, I think that people may confuse it with live-action because there are a lot of live-action Disney remakes, like "Beauty and the Beast," "Jungle Book" … And this should feel like it fits in that collection, but we have used animation techniques.

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Belle and Sebastian's Stuart Murdoch on empathy, Morrissey, and the future of the band

The long-running Scottish indie-rock band comes to town this week.

PAT KING
patrick.king@metro.us

The long-running and critically acclaimed Scottish band Belle and Sebastian has always been more of a world that lead songwriter Stuart Murdoch has wanted to live inside than a body of incredible songs. As a young man, Murdoch lost much of his youth while struggling with chronic fatigue syndrome, which left him bedridden on and off for nearly seven years. During this time, he wrote songs and hoped to one day form a band to perform the music and stories he had played out in his head.

After assembling friends and whoever was around in his hometown to round out the band that would make up Belle and Sebastian, he released numerous albums such as "Tigermilk," "If You're Feeling Sinister" and "Dear Catastrophe Waitress" that have all now been deemed indie-rock classics. Murdoch, an astute student of pop music, quickly stood out among songwriting peers of his generation and the band gained a devoted base around the globe for his empathetic portrayals of everyday people just trying to make sense of the world.

When speaking on the phone with Murdoch ahead of the band's upcoming tour through the U.S., we spoke about how to gain a sense of empathy in your lyrics when writing songs about complicated people.

"You don't learn empathy from other singers. Unfortunately, you learn empathy from experiencing human life," the ever-pleasant Murdoch explains. "I went through a more difficult experience when I was younger, and at the time I felt, 'Wow, this is a great waste of time.' I had spent seven years of my younger life just languishing. But then, I couldn't have learned to write any other way. I guess that's how you pick up that sort of empathy, so to speak. When you sit down to write, it's not like you say to yourself, 'Wow, I'm a super-empathetic guy.' You want to write about these characters because it actually makes you feel better. You just want to write about people you see around you.

Naturally, the conver-

"When you sit down to write, it's not like you say to yourself, 'Wow, I'm a super-empathetic guy.' You want to write about these characters because it actually makes you feel better. You just want to write about people you see around you."

Stuart Murdoch

sation turns to one of the faces that may be chiseled off of pop music's Mount Rushmore for championing the downtrodden, Morrissey.

"He's gone over to the other side of the political and emotional spectrum, which is crazy to me," says Murdoch, whose music can certainly warrant its fair share of comparisons to The Smiths. "Because there is no other artist who really encapsulated that sense of getting what it was like to fall off the human railroad, in a sense. He managed to say that better than anybody."

Murdoch and the rest of his band, including longtime collaborators Stevie Jackson and Sarah Martin, have been on quite a bit of a hot streak in recent years with the release of the dance-influenced "Girls in Peacetime Want to Dance" in 2015 and the full-blown pop of "How to Solve Our Human Problems" in 2018. The band just announced the release of 13 new songs for a soundtrack to accompany the film "Days of the Bagnold Summer," directed by English actor and comedian Simon Bird. With such a solid band in place, Murdoch believes that the band is currently in a golden era in terms of creating with ease.

"To quote our last prime minister [Theresa May], we have been 'strong and stable' for the past 10 or 12 years," jokes Murdoch. "I think we've gone beyond that where we've started to loosen up a little bit. We're confident. Whether it takes a single voice or a large rock arrangement, we feel confident in each other to get it right. To not have everybody having to play at all times. We're really comfortable with each other. ... That one was quite a nice relaxed record to make [the new soundtrack]. It is a good position to be in. We probably reap the rewards of being around the same people for so long. But as well, if people are relaxed about it, you can also bring other people into it. We have a working policy of anything goes these days."

Ever since regaining his strength following that horrible period of suffering from chronic fatigue syndrome, Murdoch has never turned down the direction of his artistic muse letting his music and unique perspective of life lead the way for nearly 23 years. Now, at 50 years old, if Murdoch could have chosen a different path instead of music, what would his life look like?

"I fantasize about public transport," he says. "I'm a real geek about public transport. But also, going along with the saving-the-planet vibe, I wish someone would give me a billion dollars to transform the public transport systems of upcoming cities and make super-green train systems. I'd love to do that!"

Belle and Sebastian play Union Transfer this Friday, July 12.

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Philly POPS honors the United States, Disney and modern love

What you missed during POPS on Independence last Wednesday.

MADELINE PRESLAND
letters@metro.us

BACHARACH PHOTO

A Disney star and surprise onstage proposal wowed a large crowd in front of Independence Hall during a beloved Independence Day Eve tradition.

On July 3, concertgoers picnicked on the lawn and waved miniature American flags during the free annual POPS on Independence concert. The Philly POPS orchestra performed on a stage with Independence Hall as the backdrop. The iconic Philadelphia landmark gains new meaning around July 4, and acts as a central location for Independence Day celebrations. Though audiences can consistently expect a dazzling performance of American favorites by the orchestra, the performance last Wednesday included a few special guests.

Singer and actress Susan Egan joined the orchestra for a glamorous performance of "Yankee Doodle," the third song in a series of patriotic classics to help set the mood. Conductor Todd Ellison turned to Egan to welcome her to the steps of Independence Hall.

"You never thought you'd share a stage with George Washington, right?" he said during the show, gesturing toward the statue of the first American president.

Performing in this concert with the POPS has a significant meaning for Egan. She is actually a self-described "huge geek" for all things related to the American Revolution, so she was extremely moved by having the opportunity to sing directly in front of Independence Hall.

"Philly is where it all started," said Egan after her performance. "It was surreal to walk behind the orchestra to step onstage and read the plaque that said, 'The building where the United States was born.' You walk down the streets and imagine what it was like when this brainchild of a country began."

Egan is a renowned singer and actress, and her career includes playing not just one, but two Disney princesses. She was the original Belle when "Beauty and the Beast" debuted on Broadway, and voiced the sarcastic Megara in the Disney adaptation of "Hercules." Egan and POPS performed a compilation of iconic princess solos from throughout Disney's history, including songs sung by new princesses changing what it means to wear a Disney crown.

"I love [that] they are outcasts, they are neurotic, and I love how their music has become a score for so many generations," she said. "When new princesses come out and I sing their songs, it's a testament to Alan Menken, whose legacy inspires writers to write for family films and Broadway."

In addition to the tribute to all things Disney, the concert had another fairy-tale moment. Briana Maiden, 27, and Matthew Modzelewski, 29, joined the POPS onstage during the middle of the show. Their appearance was initially disguised as them winning a contest, but Modzelewski bent down on one knee and asked Maiden to marry him. When he slipped the ring onto her finger, both the audience and orchestra cheered.

Modzelewski and the POPS started planning the proposal more than six months before the concert. Maiden said her new fiancé joked about proposing at the annual concert earlier this year, but she didn't take it seriously.

"It was hiding in plain sight, so that way she would never expect it," said Modzelewski. "Our first official date was at the Philly POPS three years ago, so that's why I wanted to come back."

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PHILLIES ERA WOES TIE TO YOUNG PITCHING COACH

THE SPORTS PROFESSOR

GLEN MACNOW
@RealGlenMacnow

Last week, Gabe Kapler proudly said the Phillies had discovered a troublesome trend among their pitchers that was leading to home runs allowed.

"We're confident," the manager declared, "there's a specific adjustment that is going to help us get better."

The next day, against Atlanta, they gave up three taters. The day after, they gave up five more.

It's gotten ridiculous. At their current pace, the guys in red pinstripes will allow 276 dingers this season, obliterating the franchise record. That would also break the Major League mark — although the pathetic Orioles and Mariners appear likely to beat them there.

As we pause for the All-Star Game, it seems the local pitching staff is best suited to be serving up fodder for the Home Run Derby.

Granted, this is the year of the long ball throughout baseball. Blame it on juiced balls or tighter laces or hitters' love of launch angles. Home runs are up everywhere.

But it goes deeper with this squad. Compared to last season, the Phillies are way up in ERA (4.66 from 4.14 in 2018), hits allowed per nine innings (9.3 from 8.5), and walks allowed per nine (3.3 from 3.1). And while the rest of baseball becomes a whiff-a-thon, their strikeouts are down from 9.3 to 8.5 per nine innings.

What's happening here? From my perspective, there are several culprits. Start with the pitchers themselves, who are responsible for their own performance.

The Phillies' pitching staff has struggled under Chris Young. GETTY IMAGES

And blame injuries, particularly in the bullpen. In the case of Jake Arrieta, we can cite both his stubbornness and the bone spur in his pitching elbow, which was revealed on Sunday.

But it's more than coincidence that ERAs are up for seven of the 10 Phillies who've pitched at least 18 innings in both 2018 and 2019. So I'll point the next finger at first-year pitching coach Chris Young.

I believe this staff's shortcomings are more mindset than talent. Every pitcher save Aaron Nola appears obsessed with nibbling at the corners. I've come to recognize their patterns of throwing breaking balls, trying to fool the opposition. If I can see it, you know the opposition has spotted the flaws.

The 38-year-old rookie pitching coach is regarded as a bright mind who moved up because of his acumen in scouting and analytics. The Phils promoted him before this season when other teams inquired about hiring him away.

When Young was given a Major League uniform, Rick Kranitz, his predecessor, was pushed out after one season. Kranitz landed on his feet as Atlanta's pitching coach. The Braves' ERA is now 47 points better than the Phils', and only figures to get better.

Kranitz, 60, is an old head who may not be as astute at crunching numbers. But he had strong relationships with his pitchers here, knowing many as they rose through the system. Obviously, he got better results than Young has out of essentially the same crew.

Certainly, this isn't all Young's fault. The Braves' farm system shames the Phillies'. And while Phils GM Matt Klentak boasted in the spring of his "objectively excellent offseason," many fans wondered how he had confidence sitting pat with a rotation of Nola, Arrieta, Nick Pivetta, Manny, Moe and Jack.

And so here we are. Discussing the boom in homers allowed last week, Young told the Philadelphia Inquirer, "It's not the baseball, it's not the air, it's not the hitters. It's something that we, as a staff, have to address and get better at."

Sounds right to me. Maybe try mixing in a damned fastball.

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JIM LLEWELLYN

Jim Llewellyn is the sportsbook manager at SugarHouse Casino.

GETTY IMAGES

Some sports bettors prefer to use a hedging technique when betting on games. It's a conservative approach to wagering that can be smart at times, but obviously don't expect to win big. You're essentially chipping away at things. The phrase "hedging your bets" is used in everyday life. A real-life example would be if you were having a summer cookout and were trying to decide whether your guests will want hot dogs or hamburgers. In essence, you would buy and serve both … therefore, hedging your bets.

In sports betting, hedging is typically when you place multiple wagers on the same game. For instance, let's say you bet today at **MetroBet.us/Sugar** on the Eagles to cover their -9 spread in Week 1 against the Redskins. Maybe between now and then, there is a significant injury to a player, the line moves a bit and now you're not so sure of an Eagles blowout. You could then take the Redskins at +9 (or whatever the line shifted to). If you place the same amount of money on both bets, then the only thing you would be risking is the vig you would have to pay if the Eagles won.

If you bet less on the Redskins than you did when wagering on the original bet with the Eagles, then you would be making a partial hedge bet. Hedging is often popular with "futures bets" and bets during a playoff series when you might pick a certain team to win the series before it starts, but don't think that team will win a certain game within the series.

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Best Bets

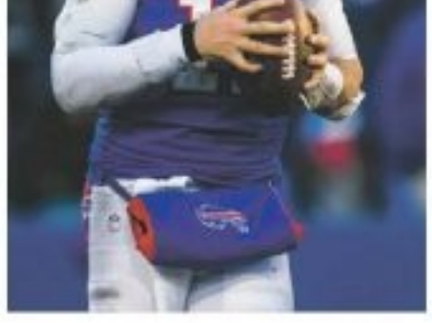
NFL Futures: Bills over-under wins

The Buffalo Bills' over-under win total at **MetroBet.us/Sugar** is set at 6.5 games and hitting the over should certainly be doable for a franchise that has been trending in the right direction.

The Bills broke their playoff drought two years ago before going 6-10 last season. A big reason for the step back was that Buffalo gave the keys to rookie Josh Allen last season.

NFL analyst Boomer Esiason believes that Allen will be the best of the Year 2 quarterbacks in 2019, as unlike Baker Mayfield and Sam Darnold, Allen will be playing for the same head coach again this year in the steady Sean McDermott.

The Bills also received high marks for their offseason as they signed five offensive lineman in free agency and bolstered their already-strong defense with the No. 9 overall pick Ed Oliver out of Houston.



Giving us even more confidence that the Bills will hit the over at **MetroBet.us/Sugar** is the fact that they have the fifth-easiest schedule in the NFL, getting to play both the Dolphins and the Jets twice. Buffalo will also match up against NFC East teams, with relative cupcakes — the Redskins and Giants — on their schedule.

The play: Bills Over 6.5 wins -182

MATT BURKE

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MATT BURKE

Matt Burke is a veteran sports journalist and the Founder and Editor in Chief of MetroBet.

It's not quite as bet-friendly an event as the Super Bowl (or any NFL game for that matter), but the annual MLB All-Star Game does offer a surprisingly high number of unique betting opportunities. There is currently a plethora of betting options for tonight's Midsummer Classic (8 p.m., FOX) at **MetroBet.us/Sugar** including unique game lines, parlay options and game props.

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Here are some of the top options:

Moneyline
National League (+102) at
American League (-115)

Total Runs
Over 8.5 -115 Under 8.5 +100

Moneyline and
Total Runs 8.5 Parlay
Home Team and Over +235
Home Team and Under +260
Away Team and Over +270
Away Team and Under +295

First team to score
National League -148 at
American League +123

Extra Innings to be played
Yes +800
No -1430

A great one to bet on here are the totals (total runs over-under). The conventional wisdom suggests that most every All-Star Game has a ridiculously high score because it's typically offense-heavy. That's true for the NBA and the Pro Bowl, but baseball has had some surprisingly low scores over the years. Remember, these elite pitchers like to show off, too!

GETTY IMAGES

Neither the American nor National League have put up double figures in runs in an All-Star Game since 1998, when the AL plunked down 13 runs on the NL.

Last year's game did hit the Over, with a high-scoring affair at Nationals Park (AL 8, NL 6). But going back to the start of this decade, there have been some very low-scoring affairs. Here's a look at the All-Star Game scores going back to 2010.

2018: AL 8, NL 6
2017: AL 2, NL 1
2016: AL 4, NL 2
2015: AL 6, NL 3
2014: AL 5, NL 3
2013: AL 3, NL 0
2012: NL 8, AL 0
2011: NL 5, AL 1
2010: NL 3, AL 1

In only two of those years did the AL and NL combine for over 8.5 runs, which is the total for tonight's affair.

Most people hate to root for the Under, but you should hammer it consistently if you're a fan of making money!

The pick: Home Team and the Under (+255)

Sports on TV Highlights

8:00 am	**Tennis** 2019 Wimbledon Tournament	ESPN
3:30 pm	**NBA Summer League** Croatia vs. OKC Thunder	NBA TV
8:00 pm	**MLB Baseball** 2019 MLB All-Star Game	FOX
8:00 pm	**NBA Summer League** Denver Nuggets vs. Boston Celtics	ESPN 2
9:30 pm	**NBA Summer League** New York Knicks vs. Toronto Raptors	NBA TV

MLB Futures: Buy or sell?

Buy: Astros (+500)
Outfielder Michael Brantley has proven to be among the savviest offseason acquisitions by any team, as he's produced an .893 OPS at the All-Star break. Third baseman Alex Bregman is having a career year (.927 OPS), as he leads the team in home runs (23). Twenty-two-year-old outfielder Yordan Alvarez (1.141 OPS) has been a revelation.

The 2017 world champs look as good as ever.

Sell: Yankees (+400)
Amazingly, the Yankees have not only kept their heads above water but thrived despite Aaron Judge missing most of the first half of 2019. Didi Gregorius, Giancarlo Stanton and Aaron Hicks were also out for most of April, May and June. But while their lineup, led by excellent offseason pickup and dark-horse MVP candidate D.J. LeMahieu (.900 OPS), has excelled, their pitching could be their undoing at a short price.

New York has sorely missed Luis Severino (shoulder) in their rotation. Masahiro Tanaka has the best ERA of any Yankees starter at 3.86. The Bombers' vaunted bullpen is a modest 11th by batting average against. Unless they bring in someone like Madison Bumgarner at the deadline, don't rush to back the Yankees at 4-1 or less.

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Aries Lay down some ground rules if you feel someone is being too controlling. Use your intelligence and have facts ready to back your feelings. Handle relationships with care.

Taurus Keep moving and don't stop until you are satisfied with what you've done. Expect to face opposition if you make a change that will disrupt your household or plans.

Gemini Consider your options and what you'll have to contend with to pursue your goal. Rely on your skills to help you get ahead, not on someone who is making empty promises.

Cancer Stay calm when dealing with partnerships. Before you jump to conclusions, consider every aspect of the situation and how to best make it work for everyone involved. Compromise will pay off.

Leo Get the go-ahead before you make changes that will affect other people. Communication will help broaden your awareness about emotional issues that have been ignored for too long.

Virgo Let the past go. If you hold grudges, you will miss out on something special. Take the plunge and get involved in something meaningful. Romance is on the rise.

Libra Don't labor over things you cannot change. Forward motion and new beginnings will help you expand your interests and friendships, and encourage you to use your skills more diversely.

Scorpio If change is what you want, do something to make it happen. Your actions will be what makes a difference. Stop spinning your wheels.

Sagittarius Listen earnestly and acknowledge what others are doing, but don't feel that you must be a follower. Use whatever information you gather to help in your own pursuit.

Capricorn Don't make a fuss when you should be making a move. If you don't like something, walk away. Don't take care of someone else's business when you should be dealing with your own.

Aquarius Consider what you want and how to make it happen. Check out the changes that need to be made and decide whether the effort's worthwhile. Pay attention to detail.

Pisces A minimalist attitude will help you stretch your budget and reach your goal. Distance yourself from anyone who isn't playing fair or is trying to entice you to be excessive. EUGENIA LAST

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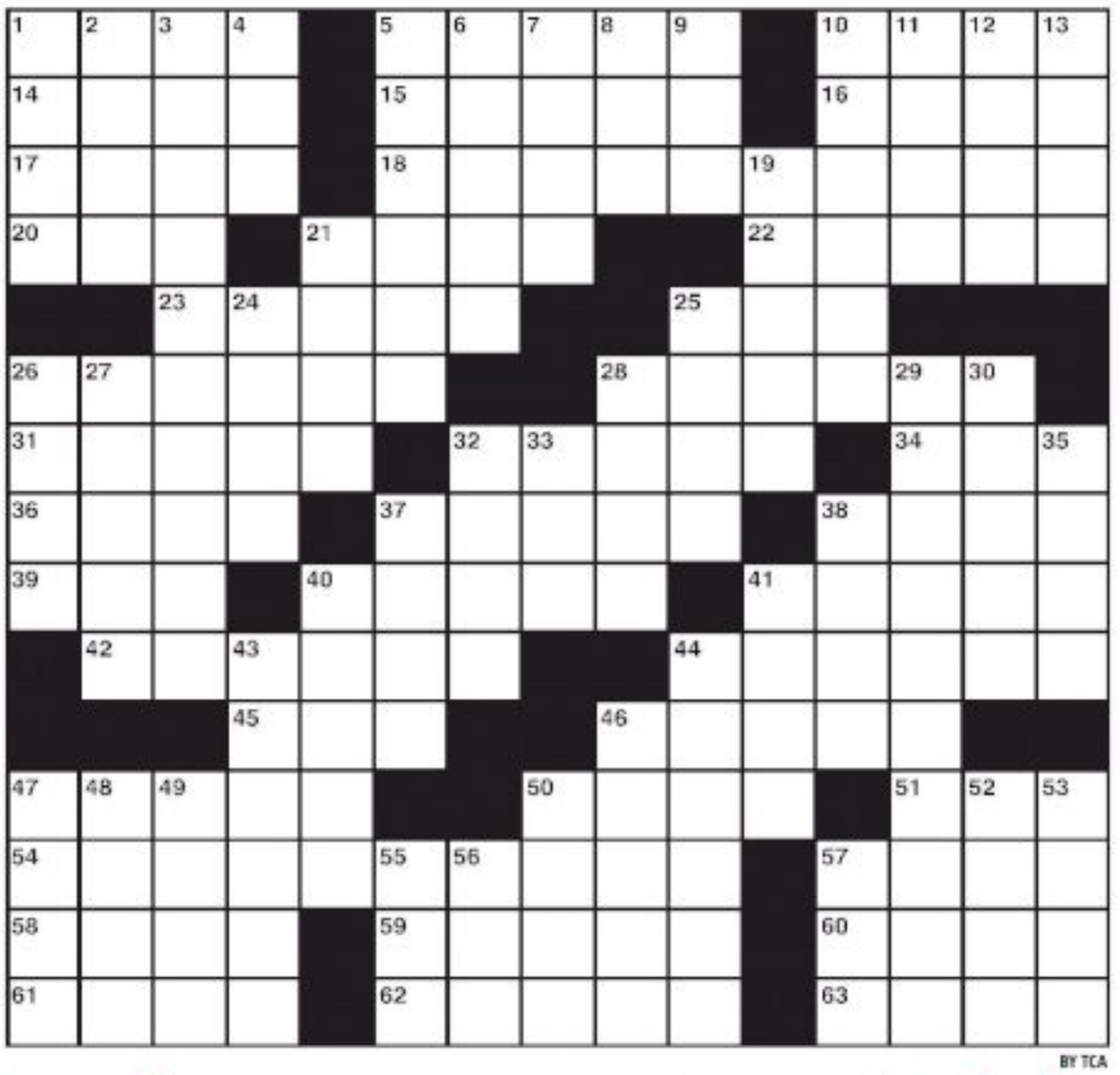
1 Calcutta dress
5 Actress __ Jessica Parker
10 Store away
14 Tearful request
15 Nom de __; pen name
16 Paper towel brand
17 Mini-market chain
18 Rams' home
20 Calendar abbr.
21 Sup
22 Prefix for sound or violet
23 Shed crocodile tears
25 Part of the weekend: abbr.
26 Bricklayers
28 Tension
31 Vote into office
32 Word attached to bed or in
34 Chum
36 Soft-furred weasel cousin
37 Meager
38 Verifiable
39 Fall month: abbr.
40 Devout
41 Donahue & Hartman
42 Chaperone
44 Oils & acrylics
45 Paris lily
46 Adhere
47 Off __; intermittently
50 Droplet
51 Keyboard key
54 Hairstylist
57 Bestow
58 __ a hand; help out
59 Baggy
60 Fail to mention
61 Not at ease
62 Suffers defeat
63 Cruz & Danson

DOWN
1 Canned meat
2 Soprano __ Gluck
3 Stands for
4 "__ a Rock"; Simon & Garfunkel hit
5 Divides
6 Without companions
7 Hoax
8 Drs.' assn.
9 Clucker
10 Slender
11 Slant
12 Finished; done
13 "Jeremiah __ bull-frog..."
19 Security
21 Start of a warning
24 Ridicule
25 Bit of numerical data
26 Office note
27 Wonderland visitor
28 Rand Paul & Mitt Romney: abbr.
29 Season of new growth
30 __ Ste. Marie
32 Kirkcaldy native
33 Greek letter
35 Not as much
37 Gentlemen
38 Skinny
40 Pencil tip
41 __ for; bought
43 Weather forecast
44 Jets & gliders
46 End
47 Deft
48 Have to have
49 "Shoot!"
50 Brief life sketches
52 Enthusiastic
53 Pot contents
55 Suffering
56 Dove's sound
57 __ it; understood



BY TCA

metro.us/wordsearch

D	I	W	M	D	H	E	C	Z	J
R	O	F	O	R	R	E	S	T	E
O	S	C	A	R	M	P	Y	T	T
T	I	Y	Y	A	I	A	D	Z	A
C	C	L	I	E	W	D	O	E	V
U	N	L	S	A	N	C	O	S	I
D	I	U	T	Q	H	S	W	B	R
N	V	S	P	I	L	L	I	H	P
O	A	L	N	J	H	G	A	D	C
C	D	O	L	L	O	P	A	Z	B

Apollo
Big
Cast Away
Conductor
Da Vinci
Disney
Forrest
Mail
Oscar
Phillips
Private
SNL
Spies
Sully
Woody

metro.us/wander

Category: Singer

	C	O	A	N
L	E	B	R	D
L	I	A	E	

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9	8	7		4				1
5	4		3		8			
			9					5
3	7			9		2	1	8
	1	4	8	2	5	7	9	
8	9	2		7			5	6
7					4			
			7		1		8	4
4				8		3	2	7

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O	N	E	O	F	■	O	M	I	T	■	L	U	A	U
A	C	T	O	R	■	V	I	G	I	L	A	N	C	E
L	E	T	■	O	L	E	■	■	R	O	U	T	E	S
■	■	L	O	N	E	R	■	■	R	U	N	■	■	■
P	S	E	U	D	O	■	■	D	U	S	T	I	N	■
L	A	S	T	S	■	S	H	A	P	E	■	N	O	D
U	F	O	S	■	M	A	I	D	S	■	B	E	T	A
G	E	M	■	B	E	L	T	S	■	B	E	V	E	L
■	R	E	C	A	N	T	■	■	P	R	A	I	S	E
■	■	■	U	S	A	■	■	S	H	O	U	T	■	■
C	L	E	R	I	C	■	■	T	I	N	■	A	F	T
A	U	X	I	L	I	A	R	Y	■	Z	E	B	R	A
B	R	I	E	■	N	A	I	L	■	E	L	L	E	N
S	E	T	S	■	G	A	M	E	■	■	M	E	T	S

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